

FROM JUSTIN:

Dear Sandy, Howard, and Diederik:

I am writing this letter to let you know that I had a wonderful time and felt very present and alive at this weekend's workshop. I felt that this weekend had an impact on me more than the last because I had decided I did not want to stay stuck in my negative ego stuff.

Over the last 2 months I have been going through a lot of difficult things that I decided to stay stuck in. But just like you said, everything happens for a reason, and this is something I have learned from you. Just like I told you over the weekend, at the True Men's Power, I was asked to take some time for myself and relax because at the time I was so preoccupied with everybody else's stuff. All I wanted to do was help everyone with their problems, and not my own. I guess it was a way of escape for me. Something I knew already, but the thing I was not really clear on was that I can't help anybody out if I do not help myself first, and process my own stuff.

Like I told you before...this just hit. It was this voice saying "Justin, what are you doing? Do you want to be stuck or happy?" And of course I want to be Happy, so I remembered back to True Mens Power and what they told me, and I listened.

Over the winter holidays I decided to take some time for myself and to just relax and be with the moment. In order to do this, I took time off work and just relaxed and thought a lot, especially about Youth On Purpose. I felt bad I was not attending the Thursday night meetings and there is so many support staff in the program that wanted to help me with my process and I did not take them up on their offer. I was scared to look at myself. I am not completely sure but I am willing to look into it. The Youth on Purpose program is such an amazing program and I have so much respect for you guys. I want to say sorry for not attending and not participating. I would also like to thank you so much for not giving up on me. Especially Howard, you have been there since the beginning, and right through to the present. Thank you. I would like to thank Diederik for inspiring me to go through with my process, and I am always interested to hear what you have to say to me. I'd like to thank you, Sandy, for creating such a wonderful program. I would like to let you guys know that I will be attending the entire Thursday meeting from now on, and also will be fully present. I would also like you to know that I would like to be involved in promoting YOP again as much as possible. I just thought I would write to you and let you know that I enjoyed myself and I let go of a lot of things, and learned even more.

Thank you.  
Sincerely yours,  
Justin Mallard  
Copywrite 2001

Randi Jensen (Parent from the Youth Project in Langley, BC, CA 2001)

I would like to share with you; our family experience with the Youth On Purpose project. Our daughter attended the 10 day retreat at the Xiena Centre on Bowen Island in August 2000 and we haven't looked back since. The experience caused such profound changes in our daughter that it would not be exaggerating to say, "She came back a different person." Gone are the self-destructive behavior and her despondency towards life that she was sorely experiencing before she attended the 10 day retreat.

My observation of Youth On Purpose has been that personal integrity and individuality is encouraged and with the under-riding theme of a sense of goodness in the world. Participants are empowered to challenge their personal relationships with courage that fosters strong families and other personal relationships.

Yours truly,  
Randi Jensen

ANONYMOUS

Hi Sandy,

Thanks for your e-mail, I have had a chance to clear with Clyde and I am feeling very good about it. As for the material that we have learned over the weekend, I am in a space of identifying my patterns and what is triggering them. I guess I reached my goal for this weekend.

I am feeling pain free (physically), I have been actually getting quality sleep, and the different areas of my body which has literally causing me enormous pain have completely disappeared. Ironically, the areas were my back, shoulders, and knees, all the areas which I carry weight on.

Sandy I will tell you this with true honesty, I am not a believer, subscriber, or even interested in the metaphysical and spiritual theories around healing, but by god this weekend was a miracle...thank you, Clyde and Diederik for truly saving my life and I mean saving my life, I am very clear after this weekend that I was heading for death and that is not meant to be dramatic.

(Name withheld by request.)

## Two Teens from Sweden -

The Youth On Purpose program originated in Sweden where it was called, Fri Sikt meaning, "Free Spirit." This is what two of the graduates had to say about it:

### TEEN #1

The Youth on Purpose program gave me the communication tools I needed to work with my thoughts, feelings, and beliefs, to let go of the past and create the life I wanted to live. The opportunities to study with Sandy Levey-Lunden and learn from her experience were a fantastic journey and a wonderful gift. In Fri Sikt I became conscious about my own way of thinking and acting in situations where I had a lot of upset and negative emotions. I developed a much clearer way of expressing myself and relating to other people. Today I carry with me a greater sense of knowing myself, and how to communicate with my parents and my partner.

Petra Stahl, Sweden, 1998

### TEEN #2

What took me with surprise when I arrived at Fri Sikt was the energy among the youths. I realized pretty quickly that young people have a much more open mind than most of the "older" people. Before Fri Sikt I had great difficulties to make things happen in my life. I felt kind of dull and didn't really take my chances in life. At Fri Sikt I became determined to let some of the energy from the other youths rub off on me. I went to Maui, Hawaii right after the project was over. Fri Sikt really made a change in how I participated in life, and how I dealt with opportunities that came my way, such as jobs, education, adventure and social life. Fri Sikt also made a huge change in my relationship with my mother, which had been pretty bad for several years. We were always fighting about everything and I didn't want to see her or talk to her. At Fri Sikt I became aware of how to deal with me, rather than trying to change my mother into what I thought she should be. The amazing thing was that in changing me, I saw that my mother's attitude towards me also changed. Slowly, slowly, our fights became less and less frequent and less and less intense. It was a long painful process to deal with my relationship to my mother, but I have to say that it has been one of the most rewarding things I have ever done! Today I have a great relationship with my mother. We talk about everything like good friends, not hiding anything from each other. I love it when she calls and I don't mind calling her myself today. When people ask me what the single most valuable thing I got out of Fri Sikt I always talk about my mother and I. Without the support from the Fri Sikt staff and the other youths in the project, I doubt I would have this wonderful relationship with my mother today.

Jonas Eklund, Sweden, 1998

Perhaps the best way to explain how “Youth On Purpose” has saved my life would be to illustrate my prior dilemma. Picture a boy who has been brutalized by his father for his entire life. Add in an inferiority complex, coupled with abandonment issues, and a complete lack of self-esteem, and you get the perfect breeding ground for modern day pathos. In order to mask my feelings of inadequacy and guilt, I delved into the mayonnaise jar for love. At sixteen years into this story, I weighed a festively plump three hundred and thirty-four pounds.

The ramifications of my neurotic state were, quite simply, the severest case of clinical depression that I have ever had the misfortune to observe. I had left everything that I had ever known to come to British Columbia, and start a new life here with my ever able mother. Immediate grief struck her in the face like a runaway freight train. I was left gasping at her heels for validation, while she sped away cursing the male gender in a rather prolific and fallacious rhetoric. With every lashing males endured from the swagger of her tongue, I felt that I had personally attacked by the only one that I could depend on and, once again, I found myself feeling utter contempt for my gender and myself.

More wonderful results occurred because of this. I became a man obsessed. Obsessed with ending the pain through any means possible. I breathed in disgust, felt only terror, spoke nothing but hate, and saw the great fields of red release that I would personally create. I then knew that although I was in a damaged state, I must follow the greatest good. So I dropped out of high school, hoping to save my life and, quite possibly, many others. In order to cope, I started taking a heavy dose of antidepressants. The only thing I really remember feeling at the time was a distinct sensation that I had been suppressed by the Orwellian society that created my particular ghastly pathology,

Eventually I found “Youth On Purpose”. A thing that I would describe as like unto a frigid tropical breeze that ripped through my soul and left it purified. I learned the most important tool for happiness: choice. I chose to be free and happy. The key word being happy, for I had never truly understood the definition and certainly never experienced such an alien and archaic emotion. I washed away most of the blackness that tainted my being and am left with a radiant soul that overpowers the few flecks that remain. I am free. I am peace. I am love. At long last Odysseus has returned home. From a place where the air smacks of freedom, and the earth rumbles deafening tones of peace.

Ryan Coleman, Langley BC, CANADA. January 2001.

In August of 1999 my son Ryan and I, fled an extremely abusive, life threatening situation to come to British Columbia. For some months we had both believed ourselves to be in great physical danger from a man who was both my husband and Ryan's father. My husband was very suicidal, and in great rage against us both. My son had approached me and said he feared his father was going to kill us all. Murder/Suicide had been my fear for some time. After my husband violently attacked Ryan we couldn't wait any longer. At first after we arrived, our situation appeared to be a much improved one. We found a place to live quickly, and with the help of the director of the local transition house, Ryan was enrolled in an excellent school under an assumed name.

However, As the months went by our lives began to fall apart as Ryan became increasingly depressed. He dropped out of school as his thoughts turned violent, as he feared he would not be able to control himself and he would hurt someone. He was enrolled in a learning centre with the same results. In the spring 2000, I was beside myself as Ryan became increasingly suicidal and his talk turned even more to violence. I was greatly frightened when he spoke of building a bomb and going to his old school and blowing up people.

I had been taking him for counseling in Langley through the "Children who witness" program, and although he had been initially eager to go for the counseling, it did not help. In desperation, I called various adolescent mental health services and was told there was a four or five month wait for a counselor. An appointment for a psychiatrist would be about a seven month wait. Fortunately a friend who was aware of the severity of the situation was able to have her husband speak to a psychiatrist who was willing to see Ryan. Ryan attended at the Psychiatrist's office and was immediately put on anti-depressants.

I read about Youth On Purpose in the Langley Times, and called in desperation. Ryan was in a terrible state when I put him on the ferry enroute to the Youth On Purpose camp. His eyes were very cloudy and glazed from the medication, and his coordination was poor as he was so heavily drugged. I feared he would not make it through the ten days but would kill himself while at camp. Much to my astonishment he returned from camp clear-eyed, no longer on the anti-depressants and was totally a completely different individual than the one who had left. His tremendous anger and rage were gone.

My son is back in school now and is enrolled in an honors program in which he continues to excel. The anger and thoughts of violence and suicide have not returned in the five months since camp.

In October I attended a workshop for parents as part of the program for Youth On Purpose. It was also the beginning of tremendous improvement in my own life as well. To anyone who is lucky enough to have the opportunity to attend Youth On Purpose, I would deem them very fortunate indeed. Without this program I truly believe my son's life would have been squandered, and mine with it. Youth On Purpose has saved us both.

Donalee Coleman, Langley BC. January 2001. (Mother of Ryan Coleman)

**Mother of daughter with Eating Disorder:**

This letter is in support of Sandy Levey-Lunden and the Youth On Purpose program.

I have met Sandy through Youth On Purpose. This is a program for teens with various problems. My daughter happens to have an eating disorder. There are also other teens with drug and alcohol and other various problems.

Since my daughter became involved with the program, her eating disorder has retreated quite a bit. She feels much happier and healthier.

The program also has workshops for parents and it is part of the Uniting the Family Foundation. In my view, every family with teens can use this program to create harmony in the family and to improve communications within the family members.

In this day and age we live; teens feel very neglected as all family members are always on the run. The program seems to concentrate on sharing the problems, yet it has much better and deeper function: it teaches them life skills, communication skills, leadership skills and coping skills. It also helps them in public speaking.

Since my daughter joined, I have become a very enthusiastic member of the program as I see the effects of the program on all the kids involved. By being part of this program, they are given lifelong skills and they take the first step in being a productive member of the society.

I think what Sandy has started in Canada is wonderful and should be included in every community and school. It teaches the kids to deal with their problems not through hatred but through love. It gives them positive tools to deal with their teenage angst. Let's remember some of these kids are emotionally and physically abused kids. Yet, after completing the program, they demonstrate a very mature behavior and leadership. If you have any questions, or need any more information, please feel free to call me.

Yours very truly,

Ayla Akyurek Vancouver, BC, Canada. November 2001.

### **Youth On Purpose Program Assistant**

I have been an avid supporter and assistant in the Youth on Purpose program since it first began. I have assisted in the 10-day summer program in 2000 and 2001 and several of the 3-day workshops.

The Youth on Purpose program does an extraordinary job of transforming the lives of young people and their families to become more loving, more connected and more joyful.

Many youth come to this program with problems in school, depressed, angry, unable and/or unwilling to communicate with their parents, and wasting their talents and abilities.

Through the workshops and ongoing counseling, the youth are introduced to spiritual principals and ways of thinking that guide them to release anxiety, judgments, fear and guilt. They learn how to deal with their anger, upsets and depression. They learn communication skills that enable them to express themselves in a safe and truthful way. They are guided to reconcile with their parents and siblings. They learn how to set and achieve goals that are meaningful to them. They discover how to align their passion, purpose, and deepest values with their direction in life.

A natural result of this is that the self-esteem of the youth improves visibly. They are more joyful, loving and alive. Their relationships with their parents and siblings improve. They have the communication tools to handle their upsets when they happen, and the support of the Youth On Purpose staff and assistants along the way to keep them on track.

It is through the loving guidance and masterful teaching of Sandy Levey-Lunden that the Youth On Purpose program has been as successful as it is. Her dedication to bringing people together is profound. Her desire to create peace in our families is unwavering. Her remarkable skill as a social worker is unsurpassed. I urge you to permit Sandy Levey-Lunden to work for Youth On Purpose in this Country. Yours truly,

Miriam Evers. Langley, BC, Canada. November 2001.

### **Member of Youth On Purpose 10-Day Camp in Vancouver**

Sandy Levey-Lunden has been the primary teacher of Youth On Purpose since its inception in 2000. She has been an incredible mentor and teacher in the workshops that she has led, and is a shining example of the best possible teacher of this material. This is hardly surprising to me as she developed the material for the course initially. I feel unable to fully express my gratitude and appreciation for her brilliance; I have not seen it matched, and I have not seen a teacher more capable, in my life. She is a tremendous asset to Youth On Purpose. She is a remarkable jewel, and an asset to all people, particularly young people, wherever she goes.

I mean this with all of my heart: she has helped me to turn my life around.

Sincerely,

Jonathan Bean. Langley, B.C. Canada. November, 2001.

## **Volunteer and Assistant of Youth On Purpose Program**

I have had the privilege to be both a volunteer and an assistant with the Youth On Purpose program.

I was a volunteer at the Youth On Purpose camp in August 2000 on Bowen Island, and also for the ongoing Youth On Purpose weekend workshops that operated every four to six weeks after the camp, through June/July 2001.

I was a paid assistant at the August 2001 Youth On Purpose camp at Soul Harbour Ranch in Keremeos BC, and have volunteered at the ongoing Youth on Purpose weekend workshops for the youth and their families since the camp.

When I was at my first Youth On Purpose camp in August 2000, I did not know what to expect. The youth shared their stories about their extreme behavior, violence, poor academics, substance abuse, dysfunction in their living situations, and how unhappy and directionless their lives were. Their pain, suffering, conflict, and the upset in their lives were clear, and they did not know how to stop it.

I observed how the Youth On Purpose program empowered these youth to a path of healing and recovery. Through the 10 day camp, the youth were progressively introduced to a system and a tool that facilitated the opportunity for healing. This system, and this tool, was created by Sandy Levey-Lunden. And there is no one else that has the level of expertise and effectiveness with it that Sandy has.

The Youth On Purpose program uses this system and teaches this to the youth, providing them with the tools to manage and release the pain and suffering they have bottled up inside themselves.

My observation and my experience has been that this is an incredibly effective system and tool. I have been amazed how youth have chosen to apply this system and use these tools to manage and deal with, and release, their anger, sadness, indifference, pain, and suffering.

The changes in the youth are remarkable. When the parents see their children after a Youth On Purpose camp, I have observed parents say that they couldn't recognize their child – they say their child happy and smiling for the first time in many, many years. Where before there was distance within the family, now there is greatly improved communication and even closeness.

While this system and tool are focused on supporting the youth to manage and release their suppressed inner pain and suffering, this is only one aspect of the Youth On Purpose program.

As part of each summer camp that starts the year-long process, there is also another critical component, comprising 50% of the camp program. This is a program focused on drama, creativity, and expression.

The system and tool presented by Youth On Purpose and taught by Sandy to the youth, empowers the youth to deal with their “bad stuff” – their inner conflicts and manage them on a path of healing and recovery.

The Drama program is equally important, since it teaches the youth to celebrate their inner joy, their inner happiness, to demonstrate their creativity and just have fun expressing themselves.

Youth On Purpose delivers both of these systems, since they are complementary and essential for completing the process of healing and recovery for the youth. The Drama program taught through Youth On Purpose empowers the youth to create their own skits and plays, songs, dance, poetry, and other expressions, and bring out the inner child within each youth to play, to celebrate, to demonstrate their happiness and joy that they have so often kept hidden and unseen.

I have been privileged to experience these dramatic performances by the youth. I have been incredibly moved by their songs, their humor, their dramatic performances, their writings, and artwork, and the joy they express in these grade finale performances that conclude each camp.

I have seen many youth experiencing a lot of happiness and joy in their life after being involved with the Youth On Purpose program and I believe many youth would not have the life they have now if Youth On Purpose was not there for them to learn a different way to manage and release their inner pain and suffering, and empower them to be happy and to express their creativity.

Youth On Purpose, and its teachers, including Sandy Levey-Lunden, have been instrumental in facilitating these positive life changes in many youth, so that these youth now can choose to have a better experience in their life and lead happy and fulfilling lives.

With Thanks,

Richard Zverina. Burnaby, BC, CANADA. November, 2001.